

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A teleconference system for supporting realization of cooperative work among a plurality of conference systems, the teleconference system comprising:

site systems each being installed at a plurality of sites, each site system being configured to generate a workspace of an object for managing and using cooperation units corresponding to respective conferences,

and each site system comprising:

an electronic whiteboard configured to provide a graphical user interface provided by a shared workspace;

an authentication unit configured to authenticate identifications of conference participants; and

a site server manager configured to manage a workspace for managing (1) a session in the site systems, (2) a file used in a conference and created as a record of the conference, (3) reference information to a resource relevant to the conference, and (4) history information of file access made by conference participants; and

a shared workspace server configured to manage all the workspaces generated at all the ~~sites~~ site systems including managing the sessions, the files, the reference information and the history information, which are generated in the workspaces, wherein

each site system provides a conference participant with a display of a set of workspaces to choose from when the conference participant logs into the site system, the set of workspaces are those workspaces that the conference participant is permitted to participate in based on the identification of the conference participant,

one site system provides a ~~first-to-log~~ logged in conference participant with a display of a set of workspaces relevant to the first logged in conference participant, and provides a subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant a display of a set of common workspaces that are common to both the first-to-log logged in conference participant and the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participants and excluding other workspaces that the subsequent logged in user is permitted to participate, and a display of reference information managed in a workspace selected by the first ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant and the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant on the condition that the first ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant and the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant log into the one site system, wherein the subsequent logged in conference participant is permitted to select any workspace in the set of common workspaces,

the shared workspace server established a session between different site systems on the condition that a plurality of conference participants log into different site systems and the plurality of conference participants selects the same workspace, the different site systems share input/output interfaces with application software by connecting electronic whiteboards of the different site systems to the shared workspace server, and

as a response to a file reference request from one of the different site systems, the shared workspace server starts the application software to reference a file specified in the file reference request, and to provide the input/output interfaces with the application software to the different site systems with the session established.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to provide a user interface for connecting a session and making reference to a file or a resource.

4. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to instruct, when a client starts a session, all other clients already having started the session to connect to the client.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to select a workspace based on user identification information transmitted from the site system.

7. (Original) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 6, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to select the workspace based on the user identification information transmitted using an IC card by the site system.

8. (Original) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to select a workspace based on workspace specification information transmitted from the site system.

9. (Original) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to select the workspace based on workspace specification information transmitted by the site system based on information retained on an IC card.

10. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein as the response to the file reference request received from the site system, the shared workspace server is configured to start the application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request, and to provide input/output interfaces with the application software to each site system with the session established.

11. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 10, wherein the shared workspace server is further configured to, in a case where the file

specified in the file reference request is not previously registered in the workspace, temporarily register the file specified in the file reference request.

12. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the site system is configured to start the application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request, and to provide the input/output interfaces with the application software to any other site systems with the session established.

13. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 12, wherein the site system is further configured to receive the file specified in the file reference request from any other site system to start the application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request, and to provide the input/output interfaces with the application software for any other site systems with the session established.

14-43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) A teleconference support method for supporting realization of cooperative work among a plurality of conference systems, the teleconference support method comprising:

generating workspaces in a plurality of site systems, each of the workspaces being an object for managing and using cooperation units corresponding to respective conferences;

providing an electronic whiteboard at each of the plurality of site systems, the electronic whiteboard providing a graphical user interface provided by a shared workspace;

authenticating identifications of the conference participants;

managing a workspace at each of the plurality of site systems for managing (1) a session in the site systems, (2) a file used in a conference and created as a record of the conference, (3) reference information to a resource relevant to the conference, and (4) history information of file access made by the conference participants;

managing all the workspaces at a workspace server for managing the sessions, the files, the reference information and the history information, which are generated in the plurality of the workspaces;

providing at each of the plurality of site systems, a conference participant with a display of a set of workspaces to choose when the conference participant logs into the site system, the set of workspaces are those workspaces that the conference participant is permitted to participate in based on the identification of the conference participant,

on condition that a ~~first-to-log~~ logged in conference participant and then a subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant log into one site system, ~~providing the first to log in conference participant with the display of a set of workspaces to choose from, and~~ providing the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant a display of a set of common workspaces that are common to both the first-to-log logged in conference participant and the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant and excluding other workspaces that the subsequent logged in user is permitted to participate, and a display of reference information managed in a workspace selected by the first-to-log logged in conference participant and the subsequent ~~to-log~~ logged in conference participant, wherein the subsequent logged in conference participant selects any workspace in the set of common workspaces;

on condition that a plurality of conference participants ~~logs~~ log into different site systems and the plurality of conference participants ~~selects~~ select the same workspace, sharing input/output for application software between the different site systems by connecting electronic whiteboards of the different site systems to the shared workspace server; and

when a file reference request from one of the different site systems is transmitted to the shared workspace server, starting at the shared workspace server, application software to reference a file specified in the file reference request, and providing

input/output interfaces with application software to the different site systems with a session established.

45. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44, further comprising:

providing by the shared work space server, a user interface for connecting a session and making reference to a file or a resource.

46. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44, further comprising:

instructing by the shared workspace server, when a client starts a session, all other clients already having started the session to connect to the client.

47. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44, further comprising:

selecting by the shared workspace server, a workspace based on user identification information transmitted from the site system.

48. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 47, wherein

selecting the workspace includes selecting the workspace based on the user identification information transmitted using an IC card by the site system.

49. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44, further comprising:

selecting by the shared workspace server, a workspace based on workspace specification information transmitted from the site system.

50. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 49, wherein

selecting the workspace includes selecting the workspace based on workspace specification information transmitted by the site system based on information retained on an IC card.

51. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44,

wherein when the file reference request is transmitted from the site system to the shared workspace server, starting application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request, and providing input/output interfaces with the application software to each site system with the session established.

52. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 51, further comprising:

temporarily registering at the shared workspace server in a case where the file specified in the file reference request is not previously registered in the workspace, the file specified in the file reference request.

53. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 44, further comprising:

starting at the site system, the application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request; and

providing by the site system, the input/output interfaces with the application software to any other site systems with the session established.

54. (Previously Presented) The teleconference support method as claimed in claim 53, further comprising:

receiving by the site system, the file specified in the file reference request from any other site system so as to start at the site system, the application software to reference the file specified in the file reference request and provide by the site system, the input/output

interfaces with the application software for any other site systems with the session established.

55. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer readable medium storing a program causing a computer to execute processing for supporting realization of cooperative work among a plurality of conference systems, the processing comprising:

generating workspaces in a plurality of site systems, each of the workspaces being an object for managing and using cooperation units corresponding to respective conferences,

providing an electronic whiteboard at each of the plurality of site systems, the electronic whiteboard providing a graphical user interface provided by a shared workspace;

authenticating identifications of the conference participants;

managing a workspace at each of the plurality of site systems for managing (1) a session in the site systems, (2) a file used in a conference and created as a record of the conference, (3) reference information to a resource relevant to the conference, and (4) history information of file access made by the conference participants;

managing all the workspaces at a workspace server ~~for managing~~ configured to manage all the workspaces at all site systems including managing the sessions, the files, the reference information and the history information, which are generated in the plurality of the workspaces;

providing at each of the plurality of site systems, a conference participant with a display of a set of workspaces to choose when the conference participant logs into the site system, the set of workspaces are those workspaces that the conference participant is permitted to participate in based on the identification of the conference participant,

on condition that a first ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant and then a subsequent ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant log into one site system, ~~providing the first~~

~~to log in conference participant with the display of a set of workspaces to choose from, and~~
 providing the subsequent ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant a display of a set of
common workspaces that are common to both the first ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant
 and the subsequent ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant and excluding other workspaces
that the subsequent logged in user is permitted to participate, and a display of reference
 information managed in a workspace selected by the first ~~to log~~ logged in conference
 participant and the subsequent ~~to log~~ logged in conference participant, wherein the
subsequent logged in conference participant selects any workspace in the set of common
workspaces;

on condition that a plurality of conference participants ~~logs~~ log into different
 site systems and the plurality of conference participants ~~selects~~ select the same workspace,
 sharing input/output for application software between the different site systems by connecting
 electronic whiteboards of the different site systems to the shared workspace server; and

when a file reference request from one of the different site systems is
 transmitted to the shared workspace server, starting at the shared workspace server,
 application software to reference a file specified in the file reference request, and providing
 input/output interfaces with application software to the different site systems with a session
 established.

56. (Previously Presented) The teleconference system as claimed in claim 1,
 wherein each site system comprises a metadata manager and a presentation controller, and
 each metadata manager is configured to use terminal information transmitted from the
 presentation controller and to record a terminal ID, a user ID and a use start time in
 association with each other.